Tells the Facts and Names the Names

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"Torture and Kill Them"

How Gringo Doctrine Works

Along with the British law lords' decision to reject immunity for Augusto Pinochet have come calls for the United States to come clean about its support for the former Chilean dictator's regime. Human rights activists are demanding that the Clinton administration cooperate with Pinochet's prosecution and 35 members of Congress, led by Rep. George Miller of California, are pressing the government to provide Spain with classified documents about Pinochet's crimes.

Thus far, the administration has not been receptive to such pleas. Unlike many of her European counterparts, Attorney General Janet Reno has not backed Pinochet's extradition to Spain. The US has turned over some documents to Spanish authorities but not the sensitive material Miller wants released. This is hardly surprising given the US role in orchestrating the 1973 coup that brought Pinochet to power - and the stubborn refusal of the United States to examine its own blood-stained role in supporting dictators around the world.

The American capacity for either willful blindness or careful concealment is again on display in the reaction - or rather lack of reaction - to news from Uruguay, where a retired Navy intelligence officer has charged that the US encouraged military officials to kill political prisoners during the country's "dirty war" against the left. There are accusations that US personnel were "masters of torture". We conducted a Nexis search and found that the entire American press corps has devoted less than 1,000 words to the astonishing claims of retired Admiral Eladio Moll, who at one time ran Uruguay's intelligence service. A full list of the coverage finds only two short stories in The Miami Herald and a filler item carried by The Washington Times and New York Newsday.

The story began last July, when a congressional commission called Moll to testify in a commercial dispute between his son and two American businessmen. Moll unexpectedly took advantage of the opportunity to denounce US involvement in Uruguay's "dirty war". We only heard of the case because our friend Paul Wright, editor of Prison Legal News, sent us stories about the case from the Uruguayan press, which has devoted vast space to the story.

The Uruguayan military seized power in 1973 and ruled for twelve years. The regime murdered several hundred of its enemies, with the majority being killed in Argentina by Uruguayan death squads operating with the permission of authorities in Buenos Aires. While the Uruguayan junta murdered far fewer people than the fascist governments in neighboring Chile and Argentina, it arrested thousands of leftists and made extensive use of torture. Lawrence Weschler's A Miracle, A Universe: Settling Accounts With Torturers, says one in every 500 Uruguayans were tortured, the highest rate in Latin America. Meanwhile, the military turned the country into a grotesque police state. The junta posted representatives in kindergarten classes to monitor political indoctrination and citizens needed to obtain a permit to hold a birthday party.

The US supported the coup, which the CIA helped set up by destabilizing the country and seeking to produce chaos (much as it attempted to do in Chile). Along with the 1953 riots against Mohammad Mossadegh that put the Shah on the throne in Iran and the 1954 military takeover in Guatemala, the Agency has long considered its Uruguayan intervention to be one of its chief accomplishments.

(**Gringo Doctrine,** *continued on page 6)*

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Our Little Secret

Wait for the Price Hike

Here we have the proposed formal reassembly of the old John D. Rockefeller oil trust broken up ninety years ago and thus far there's barely been a bleat of indignation. Mostly there's a solemn chorus of admiring comment from industry analysts noting that the merger of Exxon and Mobil is a prudent protective move by two oil giants worried about softness in oil prices which have dropped to just over $12 a barrel from nearly twice that amount only two years ago.

It's being called a merger, though "buy-out" seems to be a simpler way of describing the engorgement of Mobil by the far larger Exxon. Why this reunification of what were, back in the nineteenth century, Standard Oil of New Jersey (Exxon) and Standard Oil of New York (Mobil)? It was Adam Smith who once remarked that when you see a bunch of business men gathered together, chances are they are conspiring to fix prices. That's certainly what the anti-trust reformers believed ninety years ago when they broke up the Rockefeller oil trust. The whole history of the oil industry has been one desperate attempt after another to limit the supply and thus keep prices up. There's no reason to see the prospective Exxon-Mobil deal in any other light.

There was a time when "Big Oil" was an explosive catalyst of populist anger against the monopolies and combinations that dominate our economic life. In the old days a suggested merger of two mighty oil companies, with 21.5 billion barrels in joint reserves and 8.8 million barrels a day in joint sales, would have sent members of congress -- particularly those from the northeast and midwest -- turning out furious press releases and invocations of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act. It's early days yet, but on the evidence of congressional reaction after the prospective (though ultimately aborted) Shell/Texaco merger last year, we should not expect much. That proposed merger barely raised a regulatory murmur, an silence all the more surprising given the fact that not long before gas prices had suddenly shot up amidst much head scratching by news commentators as to why this should have happened. The real reason was never hinted at even in the form of a hypothesis that the oil companies were simply doing what comes naturally to them -- fixing prices.

The only cautionary note from the Clinton administration back then came from Deputy Energy Secretary Charles Curtis, who wagged a deferential finger at the oil men gathered at the annual confab of the American Petroleum Institute. "Domestic energy prices have grown brittle, with troubling results," Curtis warned. "Investors and consumers don't like surprises, but that's what they're getting. Public confidence in the free market erodes when prices suddenly increase. Too much vitality will create demand for political solutions that are short-sighted and ill-conceived."

Curtis was decorously signaling that a sudden hike in gas prices might send politicians back to the sort of populist stump they were mounting in the early 1970s, when the US senate almost voted to break up the oil industry, and when Rep. John Dingell from Michigan held a hearing on the topic of "white-collar crime in the oil industry". The oil men probably thought Curtis was being paranoid. If so, they were right. Since those dark days of early 1970s, amid the great oil price shock, the oil companies have undertaken a quarter-century propaganda campaign to pursuade the American people that they are as selfless servants of the public weal as nuns in a slum.

The costly p.r. effort has paid off. In the Clinton era alone, Big Oil has scored one amazing triumph after another, amid an almost eerie silence in Congress and the media. Oil companies such as Arco operating on Alaska's North Slope managed -- courtesy of an executive order by Clinton -- to overturn the ban on selling that oil to Asian markets. Not a whisper of protest. The leasing to oil companies of the national oil reserve on the Arctic slope -- a scandal bigger than Teapot Dome -- slunk from Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt's office amid similar public silence. Why should the reintegration of the old John D. Rockefeller trust evoke any other reaction? There's scarcely a populist left in Congress. How delighted old John D. Rockefeller would have been at this public complaisance towards concentration of ownership.

So, if the Exxon-Mobil merger goes through, similar fusions in the oil industry follows fast upon its heels, we can confidently expect a look forward to an avalanche of industry-inspired propaganda about why gas prices will shortly have to go up, as part of a new bid for national energy independence. If they can sell that... yes, they probably can.

Pinochet and the US

Like those thousands of Chileans roaring their joy in the streets of Santiago, we cheered at the news that the law lords in Britain had ruled Augusto Pinochet had no immunity. From his hospital bed, the 82-year former dictator of Chile watched, live on television, the announcement of the judges' decision. He now faces an uncertain twilight, though it's still long odds he will ever have to answer in a Spanish courtroom for his role in the deaths of Spanish nationals in the coup that brought him to power in 1973.

So of course we exult today that Pinochet cannot look forward with utter confidence to equable senility, that — as more than one rejoicing friend put it to us — there is some justice in the world.

But here precisely is where we should pause and ask ourselves some simple questions. If there is truly justice in the world then, the next time Henry Kissinger steps

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onto foreign soil, there will be a warrant seeking his arrest and his extradition. It was, after all, Kissinger, as Secretary of State, who stated that the Chilean people should not be permitted the irresponsibility of electing Allende. It was Kissinger who oversaw the whole covert US program designed to destabilise Allende's government and to furnish every covert form of assistance to Pinochet and his co-conspirators.

And if not extradition to Chile, then why not kindred extradition orders for Kissinger from Cambodia, or Laos or Vietnam or any of the other nations where torturers, death squads and military goons were pressed into action by this man, when he was the prime executive of US foreign policy? Our friend Michael Ratner, at the Center for Constitutional Rights, believes the Pinochet case is one of a kind. Henceforth those fearful of a Pinochet-type surprise will travel under diplomatic status, which--except by the U.S. of course--is unassailable.

Suppose the government of Vietnam now began to press for extradition for Rusty Calley or senior officers in the chain of command that organized the massacre at My Lai? And then we have every appalling massacre in Central America in the 1980s to consider. There are plenty of retired generals from, hands red with well attested butchery, from Guatemala and El Salvador now living comfortably in the United States. They know well enough who their prime sponsor was and could testify as graphically as could Pinochet on the prime co-conspirator in their actions — the United States government.

In other words, if we look at this issue in terms of the Fourteenth Amendment, there is no equality before the law when it comes to these quests for extraditions, or to international tribunals considering crimes against humanity in all their infamous abundance. Here we find soon enough that there is one law for the powerful, such as the United States, Britain, France and other such nations, and another for the rest.

Would US courts have extradited Pinochet? The answer is as certain as the refusal of the US government to honor the request made by the government of Cuba to extradite Orlando Bosch, convicted of complicity in the blowing up of a Cuban civilian airliner in 1976, killing 76 people.

Under rapid evolution these last few years have been a kind of transnational kangaroo court system to which the United States and its allies can hale their enemies for retribution. For such enemies — Serbs or whoever — there is no real prospect of due process, no trial by jury, and without a jury such courts considering criminal conduct have no true standing.

We could imagine an international tribunal convened by weak nations, preferably ones without standing armies or navies, and with a multi-national panel of jurors. In the unlikely event of any powerful nation honoring its warrants and subpoenas that tribunal's decisions could be awaited with some reasonable expectation of justice being done. But for now, amid Pinochet's pleasing discomfiture, we should avoid any larger sense of jubilation. The hypocrisies are too blatant.

"The dead are still looking at us, steadily, waiting for us to acknowledge our part in their murder."

PINTER ON US CRIMES

For years now Harold Pinter has been a savage assailant of US imperial policies and brutalities, particularly in Central America. Here's what Britain's greatest living playwright wrote for a British newspaper not so long ago.

"How can any country, in the light of such blanket condemnation of its policies and actions, not pause to take a little thought, not subject itself to even the mildest and most tentative critical scrutiny? The answer is quite simple. If you believe you still call all the shots you just don't give a shit. You say, without beating about the bush: Yes, sure, I am biased and arrogant and in many respects ignorant, but so what? I possess the economic and military might to back me up to the hilt and I don't care who knows it. And when I say that I also occupy the moral high ground you'd better believe it.

"Sometimes you look back into recent history and you ask: did all that really happen? Were half a million 'communists' massacred in Indonesia in 1965 (the rivers clogged with corpses)? Were 200,000 people killed in East Timor in 1975 by the Indonesian invaders? Have 300,000 people died in Central America since 1960? Has the persecution of the Kurdish people in Turkey reached levels which approach genocide? Are countless Iraqi children dying every month for lack of food and medicine brought about by UN sanctions? Did the military coups in Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil and Chile result in levels of repression and depth of suffering comparable to Nazi Germany, Stalinist Russia and the Khmer Rouge? And has the US to one degree or another inspired, engendered, subsidized and sustained all these states of affairs? The answer is yes. It has and it does. But you wouldn't know it.

"It never happened. Nothing ever happened. Even while it was happening it wasn't happening. It didn't matter. It was of no interest. The crimes of the US throughout the world have been systematic, constant, clinical, remorseless and fully documented but nobody talks about them. Nobody ever has. It's probably more than a newspaper or TV channel's life is worth to do so. And it must be said that as the absolute necessity of economic control is at the bottom of all this, any innocent bystander who raises his head must be kicked in the teeth. This is entirely logical. The market must and will overcome.

"Lastly, an elegy. Curtains are drawn, lights go out. It's as if it never happened. In Nicaragua in 1979, the Sandinistas triumphed in a remarkable popular revolution against the Somoza dictatorship. They went on to address their poverty- stricken country with unprecedented vigour and sense of purpose. They introduced a literacy campaign and health provision for all citizens which were unheard of in the region, if not throughout the whole continent. The Sandinistas had plenty of faults but they were thoughtful, intelligent, decent and without malice. They created an active, spontaneous, pluralistic society. The US destroyed, through all means at its disposal and at the cost of 30,000 dead, the whole damn thing. And they're proud of it.

"The general thrust these days is: 'Oh come on, it's all in the past, nobody's interested any more, it didn't work, that's all, everyone knows what the Americans are like, but stop being naive, this is the world, there's nothing to be done about it and anyway, fuck it, who cares?' Sure, as they say, sure. But let me put it this way - the dead are still looking at us, steadily, waiting for us to acknowledge our part in their murder." ■

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Panthers in Angola, La., in Death Trial

It is rare that a prisoner who has been railroaded manages to get his case belched back into active consideration by the court system. Albert Woodfox who as a Black Panther Party man was framed for the murder of a guard at Louisiana's largest prison in 1972 and has been in prison ever since, recently accomplished this feat. Unfortunately, it seems as if Woodfox is being driven back along those same rusty tracks, the end point of which is the the Louisiana state penitentiary at Angola.

In the early 1970s the state prison at Angola was not much different than seventy-five years ago, when the state bought the land from plantation owners to launch their convict lease program. But militant racial ferment had penetrated Angola, via a group of Black Panther members from New Orleans who had been jailed after a shoot-out with police that left three of their own and two sheriff's deputies dead.

Before their trial-in which they were acquited-the Panthers took an "each one teach one" approach to the prisoners at the local parish jail. Two convict converts then took the Panthers to Angola. They were Albert Woodfox, originally imprisoned for armed robbery, but in prison after escaping to, then being arrested in and extradited from, New York City; and Herman Wallace, who was also convicted of armed robbery, staged several fantasic escapes, and was repeatedly recaptured.

At Angola, Woodfox and Wallace began organizing against systematic prisoner-on-prisoner rape, and forged links between black and white prisoners so that the administration wouldn't be able to continue playing them off against one another.

But when Brent Miller, a rookie guard (white, as all the guards were) and admired high school football player from a small town near Angola, was killed on April 17, 1972. Murder convictions were hung on Woodfox, Wallace, and two other black convicts. All claim they didn't do it. Hezekiah Brown, the only witness to the murder, which was perpetrated by men with handkerchiefs over their faces, originally failed to identify the assailants. After several days of pressure from the Warden, Murray Henderson, Brown identified Woodfox, Wallace, and another black man. (A fourth prisoner, also a black activist, was later indicted as well.)

Brown, a convicted rapist, received clemency in 1986 with the help of supportive letters from Henderson. According to papers in the possession of Wallace's attorneys, other prisoners received monthly rations of cigarettes, reduced sentences, and early releases in exchange for incriminating testimony against the Panthers.

"Woodfox and Wallace were some of our most disciplined soldiers," says Geronimo Pratt. "They are the unsung heroes we must support"

Wallace has been in isolation since the original trial in '73. Woodfox received identical treatment until he managed to get his murder conviction overturned in 1992 and was sent to the Amite, LA, jail. But the state continued to hold Woodfox on his underlying armed robbery charge, and soon reindicted him for murder.

Anne Butler sat on the grand jury that re-indicted Woodfox. Though Butler authored Dying To Tell, a 1992 book about Angola, with Henderson (the former warden) and Butler's husband, the presiding judge was satisfied that she was appropriately unbiased. Dying To Tell has a chapter on Woodfox and Wallace called "'Racist Pigs Who Hold Us Captive'". The chapter assumes the men's guilt and erroneously identifies Woodfox's original sentence as aggravated rape. In the grand jury trial the prosecutor, instead of calling witnesses, as is the standard procedure, simply had Butler stand up and explain the case.

Woodfox's retrial is scheduled to take place the week of December 7. There has been a change of venue to Tangipahoe Parish, where Miller, the slain guard, was born.

Julie Cullen, the prosecutor for the state attorney general, desired to present the case as a hate crime but was foiled by Louisiana's lack of any such statutes. Instead, Cullen plans to argue "racial animus" as the motive.

Citing old letters in Woodfox's file in which he spells "America" with a "kkk" and refers to his captors as "fascists" and "pigs," she explains, "I think this is a racially motivated Black Panther murder". Cullen also plans to introduce testimony from another of Woodfox's trials in which he makes "racial anti-white police authority kinds of statements", as she categorizes them.

The prosecution does face some problems. Cullen wanted former warden Henderson to testify, but Henderson was convicted of attempted murder in October: he shot his wife, Butler, and reportedly was watching her bleed to death when a maid walked by, saw the scene through a window, and called the police. Henderson tried to get out of the conviction with a "temporary insanity" plea didn't help matters.

Geronimo Pratt, the Black Panther leader who served nearly three decades on a murder conviction pinned on him in 1968 by the combined forces of the FBI's and LAPD's red squads, knew Woodfox and Wallace from back in those days.

Pratt recently spoke of their integrity from Ghana: "Woodfox and Wallace were some of our most disciplined soldiers. They are the kind of unsung heroes that we must support because they have asked for nothing from us for all the suffering they have suffered." ■

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School of the Americas

7,000 Rally Outside U.S. Death Squad School

On November 22, this year over 2,370 people from all walks of life stepped forward from an assembly of 7,000, to risk arrest in a funeral procession which trespassed onto the U.S. military base at Fort Benning, Georgia. Overwhelmed by the number of mourners, the army did not take their names and issue citations as it has done in past years. It loaded them onto buses, drove them off base, and passed out form letters temporarily barring them from returning.

Fort Benning is home to the U.S. Army School of the Americas, and the marchers were mourning the victims of SOA alumni. Since 1946, the SOA has trained nearly 60,000 high-and low-ranking officers for the military and police forces that underpin U.S.-friendly regimes in twenty-three countries of the Western Hemisphere. In part, the SOA alumni list reads like a Rolodex of dictators, torturers and mass murderers.

Take the case of El Salvador, whose SOA grads are far from atypical. Between 1978 and 1992 75,000 died in civil war; 85% of the deaths have been attributed to government security forces or right-wing death squads. Roberto D'Aubisson, who attended the SOA in 1972, was a chief organizer of the death squad network and planned the assassination of Archbishop Romero. Major Armando Azmitia Melara, class of '67, commanded the Atlacatl battalion at the 1983 Lake Suchitlan massacre (117 killed), the 1984 Los Llanitos massacre (68 killed, mostly younger than 14), and the 1981 El Mozote massacre (many hundreds slaughtered). Colonel Jose Mario Godinez Castillo, a 1968 SOA pupil, commanded troops who committed 1,051 summary executions, 318 incidents of torture and 610 illegal detentions. Other Salvadoran SOA alumni include Colonel Napolean Alvarado, implicated in the 1983 Las Hojas massacre; Sergeant Antonio Avalos Vargas, who led the unit that massacred six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper and her daughter in 1989; Colonel Carlos Aviles Buitrago and General Juan Bustillo, who aided in the planning and coverup of the Jesuit massacre. (General Bustillo is also wanted in France in connection with the torture, rape and murder of a 27-year-old French nurse, Madeleine Lagadec.) The list goes on and on and on.

Last February, the Department of Defense issued a report to Congress "certifying" that the content of SOA instruction is consistent with the training provided to U.S. military students, "particularly with respect to the observance of human rights". A "comprehensive review of the School's training materials" showed "nothing inconsistent with U.S. law or human rights policy", according to the executive summary of the DOD's certification report to Congress. Said review was undertaken by a military agency called TRADOC, which created a Board of Visitors in 1996 to provide civilian input into SOA "policy, curriculum, educational philosophy, effectiveness, and learning resources". The Board's "international human rights attorney" is Steven Schneebaum of Patton Boggs. In 1997, Schneebaum told the rest of the Board he believes that human rights are an integral part of the SOA's curriculum. "Is it perfect?" he asked. "No. But all human endeavors can be improved. For example, the basic course might be improved by including discussion of amnesties for abusers of human rights during previous regimes, an important issue in a number of Latin American countries about which there is considerable political and academic debate."

Since 1946, the School has trained nearly 60,000 Latin officers.

The DOD report admitted that the Army "does not keep track of the 57,000 School of the Americas graduates." Based on information provided by U.S. embassies, however, the DOD concluded that 1996 SOA graduates are "providing valuable service to their respective countries" in "military, police, government, and humanitarian capacities". The DOD's definition of "valuable service" may not be widely shared by the citizens of Latin America. Bolivian dictator Hugo Banzer Suarez (SOA '56), whose repressive methods of silencing opponents became a model for strongmen throughout Latin America, was inducted into the SOA "Hall of Fame" in 1988 and invited to return as a guest speaker in 1989.

The Pentagon report noted that "demographics of SOA students, like SOA courses, reflect current U.S. foreign policy goals for Latin America." In 1996, half of SOA students came from Mexico, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru, reflecting the demise of the Cold War and the emergence of the War on Drugs as the primary excuse for U.S. intervention in the region. Tuition for the School's students is mostly paid by the International Military Education and Training program, funded by Congress, with expanded training funds for civilian School trainees.

A third program that funds the School's students is called International Narcotics Law Enforcement Affairs, created to wage the drug war. At a time when Guatemala was prohibited from receiving U.S. military training funds, Narcotics Law Enforcement paid to send Guatemalan students and a guest instructor to the School. ■

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(**Gringo**, *continued from page 1)*

The chief foe of the US and the Uruguayan military were the Tupamaros, who emerged in the 1960s as a non-violent urban guerilla movement. The Tupamaros once trashed an upper-class nightclub in Montevideo and left their most famous slogan painted on the walls: "Everyone Dances or No One Dances".

The Tupamaros enjoyed a good deal of public support, so the CIA sought to discredit its leaders by branding them as dupes of Moscow. One agent posted in Montevideo forged a letter that purported to show a Tupamaro leader thanking an official at the Russian embassy for sponsoring a conference of left-wing students.

The CIA also used straightforward tactics of repression, which succeeded in provoking a violent response from the Uruguayan left. Philip Agee was a CIA officer posted to Uruguay in the mid-1960s and later wrote in his famous exposé Inside the Company that the agency's operations "were designed to take control of the streets away from communists and other leftists. Our squads, often with the participation of off-duty policemen, would break up their meetings and generally terrorize them. Torture of communists and other extreme leftists was used in interrogation by our liaison agents in the police."

During his appearance before the Uruguayan Congressional committee, Moll said that even more Uruguayans would have been killed except that the armed forces, especially the Navy, refused to follow the "gringo doctrine". "The guidelines that were sent from the US were that the detained guerillas, once information was extracted from them, did not deserve to live", Moll said. "The gringos wanted us to kill all the guerillas." Addressing a former guerilla now in the national congress, Jose Mujica, Moll stated, "I'm proud to tell you that you are here and your friends are alive" because the armed forces rejected the advice from Washington.

Moll said that the "gringo doctrine" was also imparted at military academies in the US, including the School of the Americas (see story, p. 5), where Uruguayan and other Latin officers were trained. "The doctrine arose out of the necessity of the United States to control what it called its 'backyard' during the Cold War," he told the congressional committee.

Uruguayan intelligence chief: "The gringos wanted us to kill all the guerillas."

Indeed, some of the most repugnant figures from the "dirty war" were trained at the School of the Americas. These include General Gregorio Alvarez, who personally commanded the dissolution of the Uruguayan parliament in 1973; Captain Daniel Castella, who was implicated in the torture and death of Vladimir Roslik in 1974; and Captain Eduardo Ferro, who was involved in the arrest and torture of Uruguayans who had fled to Brazil.

Moll's charges set off a firestorm in Uruguay. The present US ambassador to Uruguay, Christopher Ashby, called Moll's charges "ridiculous". The military sentenced Moll to 15 days house arrest and announcing that he would be tried for defaming the armed forces.

However, Moll's charges have been backed by several important figures. Alejandro Otero, a former police intelligence chief, said the CIA and other US agencies "operated in police headquarters under different kinds of cover, commanding, advising and paying—They were masters in the areas of torture and state terrorism". From neighboring Argentina, Nobel Peace Prize laureate Adolfo Perez Esquivel also has supported Moll's allegations. According to Esquivel, documents uncovered a few years ago in Paraguay detailing Operation Condor — joint operations by Latin dictatorships against political opponents - proved that the United States was directly involved in the region's political repression.

Brecha, a newspaper in Montevideo, has said that Moll's charges should be thoroughly investigated, and said that in a grim fashion history gave credence to his charges. It pointed out that Argentina and Chile traditionally held few political prisoners - because they were murdered - whereas Uruguay prisons held thousands. "It's a fact that the immense majority of political prisoners [here] were not killed, whereas in Argentina and Chile there were true genocides." Moll himself told Brecha that he went public because Uruguay needed to know its history if it was to strengthen democracy.

There is no such soul searching in the US, where Moll's charges have been ignored. The admiral predicted as much in Brecha, saying he distrusted American politicians who fostered dictatorships in Latin America a few decades back but now want to "change the tape" about America's role in the region. ■

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